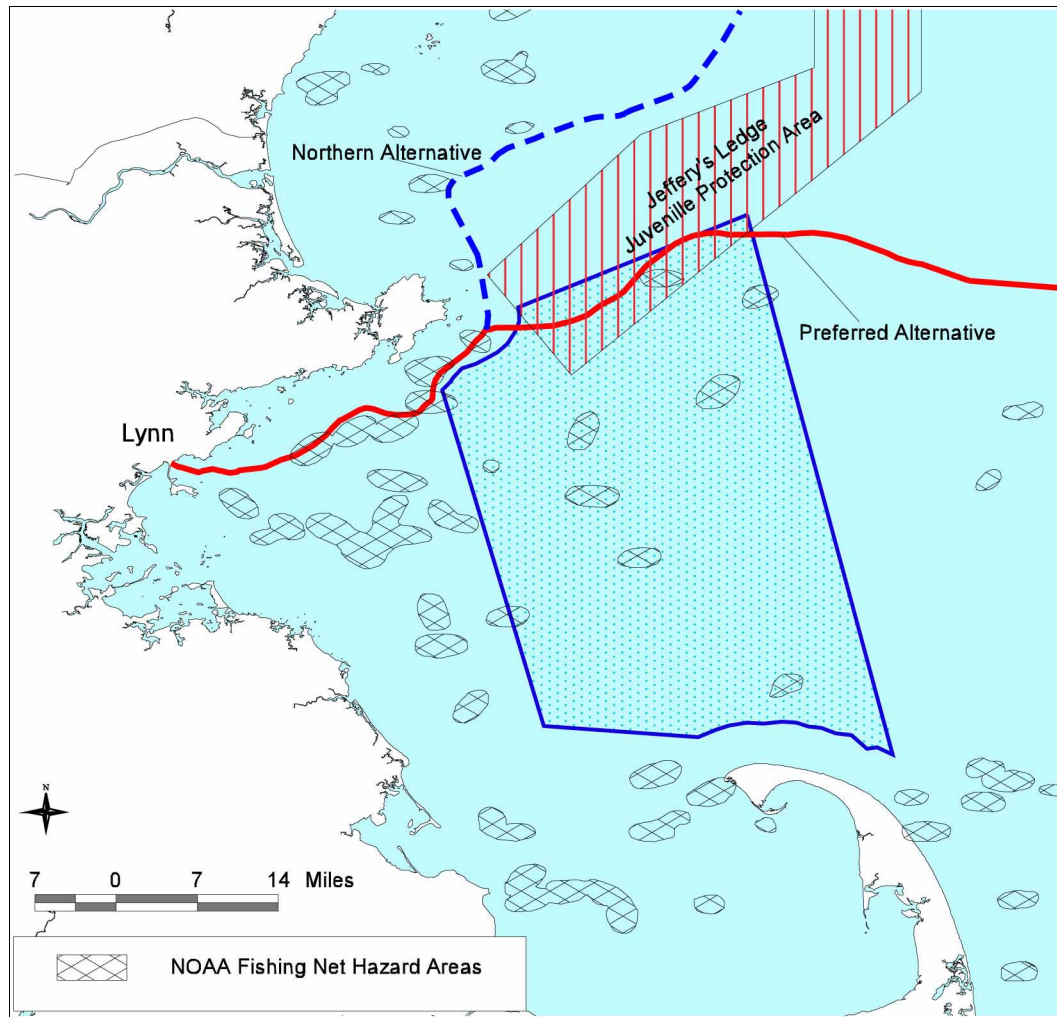


Figure 3-3: Massachusetts Bay Fishing Hazards and Restricted Fishing Areas (USGS 2000)



The major types of mobile commercial fishing gear used include otter trawls; purse and Scottish seines; and, occasionally, scallop and clam dredges. Static fishing gear includes sink gillnets, lobster pots, and longlines. With the exception of purse seines, which are set to catch pelagic fish species at or near the ocean surface, the gear can affect both ocean waters and the seabed. Otter trawls, the most common fishing gear, and Scottish seines are drawn along the seabed to catch bottom-dwelling fish species. Scallop and clam dredges harvest shellfish on or in the sea bed. Tub trawls are anchored or can drift in the water column and are used to catch groundfish. Sink gillnets can be set at any level within the water column. Hook and line are used for both groundfish and tuna. Rigid fish and lobster traps are used to harvest groundfish, lobsters, and crabs. In terms of commercial value, from 1994 to 1996 for the northeast fishery, pots and traps provided the largest amount of revenue, followed by bottom otter trawls and sea scallop dredges (NOAA 1998, cited in Earth Tech 1999).